

Passports & Travel Documents

Passports

Passports are obtained through the Passport Services Division of the Department of State. Through your local passport office, usually at the Post Office, you can apply for a new passport, renew your old one, or do any of a number of things, including replacing a lost, stolen, or damaged passport, or adding new pages to your existing book. You may find the nearest passport office by using this internet address:
<http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

Traveling Overseas

Once you have your passport, you still have to check with the country or countries you'll be visiting to determine whether or not you'll need a visa. A visa is permission from a country to cross their borders and comes in the form of a stamp in your U.S. Passport. You usually have to mail your passport to the Embassy or Consulate of the country you'll be visiting, so allow plenty of time to accomplish this. A list of visa requirements for countries can be found at
<http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>

Also, check the State Department website for travel warning and consular information sheets that provide very helpful information about the country you plan on visiting. The State Department services website also contains very comprehensive information on all the services it provides both stateside and abroad. This includes crisis assistance for U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad, and various travel publications available on-line. <http://www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/>

American Embassies and Consulates General

Many U.S. Diplomatic Missions abroad have information on-line. For those that don't, check the State Department's Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts for addresses, and phone and fax numbers for U.S. Embassies and Consulates throughout the world.

Passports in a Hurry

Passports usually take from 30 to 40 days to issue. For a \$35.00 fee--plus the cost of 2-way overnight mail--you can expedite this process and receive your passport in 7 to 10 days.

Travel Documents for legal residents

A travel document allows you to return to the US after traveling outside the country. You must apply for a travel document BEFORE you leave the US. There are 3 types of travel documents issued by INS:

- Advance Parole
- Reentry Permits
- Refugee Travel Documents.
- Advance Parole

Advance Parole allows you to return to the US after traveling out of the country if you:

- are adjusting to Legal Permanent Residence status
- have Temporary Protected Status
- have applied for Asylum

-have been paroled in to the US

Reentry Permit

You should apply for a Reentry Permit if you are:

- a legal permanent resident and you wish to remain outside the US for more than one year.
- a legal permanent resident who cannot get a national passport from your country of nationality.
- A reentry permit is valid for two years.

Please

note: You do not need a reentry permit if you are leaving the country for less than one year. However, if you leave the country for more than one year, you will break the period of continuous residence that is required to become a citizen even if you get a reentry permit.

Refugee Travel Document

A Refugee Travel Document allows people who are or once were refugees or asylees to return to the US after travel abroad. You should apply for a refugee travel document before you leave the US. A refugee travel document is generally valid for one year.

How do I apply for a Travel Document?

Use INS Form I-131 (Application for Travel Document). You can get the form in person at the local INS office, by telephone at 1-800-870-3676, by

fax at 408-885-9950, or by downloading the form from the INS website
<http://www.ins.usdoj.gov>

Where should I send my application?

If you need advance parole, you should mail or bring your form and all required documents to the local INS office.

If
you need a reentry permit or refugee travel document, you should mail
your application and all required documents to: USINS, Nebraska Service
Center, PO BOX 87131, Lincoln, NE 68501-7131.

If you would like Pete to help, you can contact his office here.